/25 cont./

585 as a sort of prediction that she, too, will give birth to a boy. A little later the bride is brought to the separate small house (amhara), and then the real wedding-feast begins.

On the second and third days the relatives come, meet the bride, and bring her presents, each according to his means. When they want to get acquainted with the bride, a friend of hers, her delegate (dade), lifts from her face the veil with which she is covered; the visitors greet the bride, and she, without saying a word, stands erect and quietly, with her eyes lowered. The responses are not made by her, but by her friend. When sufficient time has elapsed after the wedding, /26/ she answers questions addressed to her, but, instead of saying "yes" or "no," she only shakes her head.

The young bride remains in the amhara for some months; [592] then she is invited into the main house, and from this time on the whole care of the household is put on her shoulders. She always tries to satisfy her parents-in-law and to act according to their wishes. For several months she does not speak to anyone; afterwards she begins to speak, first to the younger people in the house and in the village, and later on also to the older ones, and last of all to her parents-in-law. The young bride is referred to by all the villagers as "our daughter-in-law"; they bring her various kinds of sewing-work, which she does without reward.

602 For many years the young couple avoids being seen together by the husband's parents, and they cannot eat together [606] in their presence as long as they live. In conversation with older [264] people, whether relatives or strangers, the wife cannot refer to her husband as "my husband," nor the husband to his wife as "my wife." The daughter-in-law may not sit down on the bench on [606] which her father-in-law or mother-in-law have been seated. [551] The wife can never call her husband by name and in cases of necessity manages instead with the pronouns "you" and "he." In the same way, she does not call by name her brother-in-law, her husband's foster parents, members of the family, the village elders, etc. The husband, on the other hand, only

avoids

/47 cont./

782 and light, well-being and success in everything; grant
821 beauty, charm, and elegance to our maidens so that, like you, they may shine, glitter, and warm people." In the prayer to the moon, they express the wish that the children should become like it in brilliance.

/48/ 15.

Prayer to Khphath and Khvnash

782 This prayer is offered on the Saturday of the week of
[796] Thomas, with cheese, bread, wine, candles, etc. brought as offerings. The aim is to solicit health and prosperity for the family. On one of the following Saturdays a similar prayer is addressed to Khvnash. Khphath and Mdzhath are
• [551] men's names in Abkhazia.

16.

"Ananaha"

782 Anan means "mother." The oldest woman of the
796 household places some money on a loaf of bread (Anan l phara = money of Anan) and goes into the kitchen-garden where she places three cucumber-leaves on the loaf of bread and the same number on her own head. She then fastens a lighted candle to a cucumber stalk and, holding incense in her hands, prays, "Mothers and creators, do not let me have grief from my sons: do not cast me into sorrow because of them, but let me see them prosper." A similar prayer is said to Ashatsanha, the god-creator or god-father. A cow and money are offered in sacrifice to him. During Lent, the village maidens also used to pray to the "Mother of the Waters" that she might grant them long and thick hair.

17.

Prayer for the Ear

753 The Abkhaz says, "ahsa r lmha i klou," which means

A 585 [761 cont.] eat with her people or show his face, which he conceals with the hood of his coat. The bride now stays for a time in a special hut (amhara), after which a feast is arranged and she is blessed by the father of the house; the same is done for the groom when he returns to his father's house (apʻkhaǯarkhe = removal of shame). The customs at the wedding, which takes place after the trousseau is completed, are almost the same as among the Osset (see p. 76). The young bride continues to live in the aforementioned small hut and may not speak with anyone. The young married couple may not visit the parents of the groom at the same time for several years afterward, and the two of them may never eat with them at the same time. The man may never utter his wife's name, nor she that of her husband or those of his relatives, in front of others.

A [606] [593] [601] [551]

C 583 582 [762] Among the Cherkess, too, girls are seldom stolen now; the bride is acquired for money and animals. The men marry from fifteen to twenty-five, the girls from twelve to sixteen years of age. During courtship (nakekh) the priest (mollah) completes the marriage contract after closure of the sale, as among the Mohammedan Abkhaz, whereby he joins the hands of the representatives of the bride's people. About two months later the purchase price is turned over, and soon thereafter the two- to three-week wedding festivities take place, with which are associated several peculiar customs preserved best in Kabarda.

A 584

C 585 The custom is so closely connected to the former abduction and defense by the kin group that, after the appearance of the bride, her mounted escorts defend themselves with their knouts against the youths, who stand in front of the house and attempt to unhorse them with poles until they succeed in jumping over the fence and gaining entrance to the house.

The groom is taken in for the wedding days as a "foster-son" (kan) by another kin group, from which he is assigned an escort (ǯatso-kot) of his own age, who attends him, hides him, since he is not allowed to meet older men until the "reconciliation" (see below), watches near him during the night, and rides about with him in the daytime in the hill pastures; here he gives him animals (ǯaga = for roasting), which he gives his people and

C [764 cont.]
608 cow, and other things. After two to three years they take their
[431] ward (akhup'a), together with gifts of animals and food, to the parents, who honor them and give them rich gifts. After the child comes of age, the foster-father gives him back to his parents, who give him animals, weapons, and money and honor him as a close relative. If the foster child dies before this, he buries him in accordance with custom, holds the memorial service, makes an offering, etc.; if his ward is orphaned, he also buys him a bride or induces him to abduct one.

C Rearing is aimed at teaching the boy good manners,
[867] perserverance, courage, bravery, skill in horsemanship, fencing,
[868] shooting, and, formerly, manipulation of the bow and skill in raiding. For his part, the ward must stand by his foster parents, search for lost property, and protect them from robbery and insult, if need be with the help of his own parents. If the foster father, foster mother, or one of their children dies, he procures the coffin, leads the interment and memorial ceremonies, and observes the rules of mourning. The foster-father's sons are his devoted friends; if one of them marries, he gives the bride rich gifts, or when one of them has abducted a girl, he takes her into his protection, and, as a prince's son, no one would seize him for it.

C Noble girls are likewise given to foster parents, who
[867] instruct them in the manual skills of women and teach them
[868] modesty, obedience, and the like. In the seventh or tenth year,
[29] the laced leather bodice is put on them (see above, p. 18).

A The children of Christians are occasionally baptized
C and given a Christian name, but the name by which they are
551 usually called is, as among the Osset, the native one chosen at birth--among the Moslems, many Tatar or Arabic ones are used. Such are, for example, Goinuqua (= fur-son), Keltšuqua (= wish-son), Keltsuqua (= wish-son), Koituqua [765] (= upside-down son), Meiremaqua (= Friday-son), T'a'šine (= lamb of God), T'agelak (fear of God), 'Adzug (= young dog), Togdžuqua (= fat-man's son); Temir (= iron), Petak (= twig), Košbaš (= double head), and the like. Feminine: Džennet (= bliss),

[765 cont.]

A 55 Devlet-khan, Tatema, Kistaman, Tepsike, Gosop'o khuraya (= round prince's-daughter), etc.

A 766 Death. In Abkhazia, when someone has been struck by lightning, he is laid in a coffin, and this is hung on a tree (as in old Lazistan, see above, p. 671 [untranslated], in Siberia, and other places), until the body has completely decayed; then the bones are buried.

C 766 In the sixteenth century the Cherkess used to seat the body of a nobleman, after having removed the entrails, on a tall, wooden bedstead in the field for a week. The two nearest relatives stood nearby, and on the bed was a girl who brushed away the flies with a silk cloth stuck on an arrow, while the first of his wives sat at his head without weeping. Afterwards the body, with clothing and weapons, was laid in a split and hollowed tree trunk, along with part of the gifts, silver vessels, bows, arrows, and the like, which relatives, friends, and serfs had brought, and set on the ground at the burial-place; over it was raised a mound whose height showed how much esteem the deceased had enjoyed. As a sacrifice for the dead, the innocence of a twelve to fourteen-year-old girl was offered, which the youths attempted to take by force as she lay on an ox-skin. After the burial a servant led the dead man's bridled horse to the grave on several days and called him to eat three times.

A 764 Now deceased persons are laid to rest with the assistance of a Christian or Mohammedan clergyman (mullah). The lamentation for the dead at the coffin and amidst the clothing and weapons of the deceased, the feast for the dead, etc. resemble the customs of the Khevsur (see p. 737 and following [untranslated]); here, however, male mourners, too, kneel at the coffin. While the body is being carried to the grave, a rope is thrown over the roof and pulled back and forth in order to determine whether the house, which has been severely shaken by the departure of the deceased, still stands firm (as in Mingrelia). In earlier times, the Cherkess also threw the right ear of his horse into the grave, after they had first put the reins into the dead man's hands and led the horse around the grave three times (cf. p. 80). The mother, the wife, and the foster

3: Janashia I-5 (ca. 1900) 1937 RI3 Abkhas RI3
Adzvibzha

4. *Àbna-intswakhwə̀* (god of the woods)

The woods also have their "part of deity", *Àbna-intswakhwə̀*. 776 824
Àbna denotes wood, forest; *intswakhwə̀* we already know. When an Abkhaz enters a forest, or if he has to pass a night there, he prays to this deity for protection. I have, however, failed to collect more information about this god of the woods.

Àbna-wowyə̀

In ancient times the forests of Abkhasia were inhabited by *Àbna-wowyə̀*, "forest-people." *Àbna* denotes forest, and *a-wowyə̀*, man. 539 They were strong and courageous, but very ugly in appearance. Their bodies were covered with bristle-like hair. From their breasts projected a strange object, shaped like an axe and strong as steel, which served as a weapon; and by pressing an enemy to their breasts they could cut him into two. They preyed incessantly upon the people, who, however, in the long run, and with God's help, destroyed them. The last of them dwelt in an impassable forest, called Urak', near the village of Adzvibzha. In the same forest there lived also the courageous Khukhw Dchit'anàà, with his herd. Between Khukhw and this "forest-man" there was intense animosity. The ugly "forest-man" would come to Khukhw's hut every midnight, and inquire: "Dchit'anàà Khukhw,[1] art thou at home?" "Yes, I am. If thou art not an old woman come and fight me," responded the fearless Abkhaz. The "forest-man", however, would never agree to a single combat. Khukhw, tired at last of these childish pranks, resorted to a ruse. Placing a log in his bed, he went outside and hid behind a bush not far from the hut. At midnight the "forest-man" came as usual, and receiving no reply, he concluded that Khukhw was soundly asleep. Entering the hut and seeing, as he thought, the sleeping form of his enemy, he was about to aim a blow at the log, when the Abkhaz, who had crept in unawares, fired a shot at him. The "forest-man", although mortally wounded, managed to crawl away, and on the following morning Khukhw followed up the blood-stained footprints, and finding the dead body of his enemy, buried him with due honours. Khukhw appropriated the wealth of the last "forest-man", and also married his beautiful wife. . . .

5. *Atswaqwa*, the rainbow

The god of the rainbow is very vindictive; he soars high in the 776 clouds and punishes, either by death or the infliction of disease, all 824

[1] A peculiarity of the Abkhasian: the surname precedes the Christian name.

4: Janashia I-5 (1921) 1937 RI3 Abkhas RI3
AdZVi6Zh9

of an analogical formation in a *sh*-root- (= creating, to create, whence the verbal noun *ashardə*) word *ashatsw̱də*, which represents an epithet of a deity, and is equivalent to Georgian *gamtcheni*, creator.[1] I have not heard this word used apart from its association with the word God. This root is usually used in its past-participle form. A popular Abkhasian expression is *antsw̱də-hazshdz*, Creator God, but the following phrases are also in common use:—*ashatsw̱də irshaz*, by the Creator (lit. creators') created (said of something very pleasing), and *ashatsw̱də irmshaz*, by the Creator (lit., creators') not created (said of something unpleasing). In these examples *ashatsw̱də* is understood to be in the plural, which is unmistakably borne out by the pronominal particle r (*i-r-shaz*, *i-r-mshaz*) which indicates the plurality of the subject (the determinative word in our examples).

It may, however, be argued that the phrases just quoted are composite, and that the particle indicated, a fossilized morphe which has lost its meaning. We will therefore quote another phrase, *nas ashatsw̱də irshàma arí*, "Is it possible that the Creator (lit. creators) created these?" (it was said of the animals), in which *ashatsw̱də* is directly represented as the subject in the plural. This word, and the notion conveyed by it, must have simultaneously undergone the same metamorphosis as the basic name itself, i.e., they must have lost first the intrinsic and then the formal meaning; it became a simple plurale tantum, for instance, in the widely used name for a kind of sacrificial animal, *ashatsw̱də-dzatwə*, the Creator's (lit. creators') sacrificial animal, in which we should have had, in accordance with the rules of the Abkhasian compound word-formation, the form *ashatsw̱də-rdzatwə*. . . .

It is clear that in this case the result of the acute conflict between old and new ideas, and in connection with it, between dead and living forms, is far less definite than in the case of *antsw̱də* itself. The changes to which the latter has been subjected have been more rapid; but nevertheless, owing to language inertia, we find facts which reveal the original meaning of the process of word-formation. One such fact, quoted by Uslar, is given above. Of no less interest, in my opinion, is an example I found: the heroine of a story which I noted down, bears the following name, *antsw̱də rt'əp'hà khànkw̱la*, that is "God (‖ gods)-their-daughter-Khakula" in other words, the god's daughter Khàkûla (Khàkûla being a girl's name). The same pronominal particle r (*r-t'əp'hà*) explicitly indicates here that for the remote ancestors of the speaker, God represented the union of numerous forces.[2]

[1] In Megrelian, *odabadi*. See Janashia, *The Abkhasian Cult and Mode of Life* (in Russian) in *The Christian East*, St. Pb., 1916, vol. v, issue 3, p. 168. Also Marr, *On the Religious Beliefs of the Abkhasians* (in Russian) in *The Christian East*, vol. iv, issue 1, p. 132.

[2] See also Dcharaia, op. cit., p. 32.